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There was a bad drought, as the Government proclaimed, especially in the southern oblasts of Nikolaev, Tanbav, Dnepropetrovsk, and in Moldavia. In addition, the Government sought to re-establish war reserves of grain through the Ministry of Food Reserves, and kept these efforts up through 1950. ⁴ Note: A two-year level of State grain reserves had been built up by 1941. The combined effect of drought, State levies, German occupation, and wartime conditions reduced the farmers of the once-prosperous Ukraine to extreme want. In 1947 the maximum payment for a labor day was 1.5 kilograms of grain -- insufficient to maintain life. The Government took grain from my farm in 1946-47 on the basis of planned harvests, not actual ones. There was such hunger in the winter that the State did provide a little buckwheat and barley to prevent deaths from starvation. Nevertheless, those years were hard on the invalids and old people. Where there should be 50 million in the Ukraine, there are only 35 million today. War, deportations and executions have taken heavy tolls; the number of deaths through Government-induced starvation of the population of the Ukraine is harder to compute.

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2.

This plan is designed, say the Soviets, to equalize the payment for a labor day on big and little farms. Actually, they give all workers what they would earn on the smaller, less efficient farms. Life, which used to be full of zest, is being lived mechanically in the Ukraine.

3.

When an "intellectual" addresses the simple people, they start to mock him, and then the effect of what he says is entirely lost. A typical story tells of a grandmother who asked the grandfather what he had heard in the open-air lecture he had had to attend on the farm, on Dialectical Materialism. The paid political worker on the farm had said that Marx took the grain of Hegel's philosophy and threw away the husks. Said the grandfather to his wife, "They caught some fellow named Marx stealing grain. He is liable to get 15 years at forced labor, I reckon." This is typical of the amount of attention people pay to Party ideology.

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25X1

- 2 -

25X1

They have had such a hard time staying alive and warm and dry that they are almost exclusively materialists, and should be approached in simple, everyday practical terms concerning what happens to them.

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25X1

5.

The farmers would be the best fighters, but practically all elements of the population would resist -- workers, Factory School (FZO) workers, and even some in the bureaucracy who have close ties with the people and work on their behalf.

6.

If the well-disposed officials are at the collective farm level, the collective farmers will know them; farm chairmen will know those who are sympathetic on the Rayon level, and so on up. The same plain arguments about the lot of the people which are addressed to simple folk will count with the sympathetic bureaucrats, and the bureaucrats can best be reached through their relatives or friends on farms.

7.

Networks of acquaintances could be built up in time of peace. They can increase in prestige and strength by passive non-cooperation and small acts of resistance in time of peace. I knew of a farm on which the members warned their chairman that he had better leave them enough grain to carry them through the winter when he paid the State, or there would be trouble. The Chairman met his plan quota in full. The militiaman guarding the delivery was killed and much of the grain disappeared. There were no consequences. Underground organizations would grow faster if they had the idea that there were organizations outside the country that were on their side and might help in the future.

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